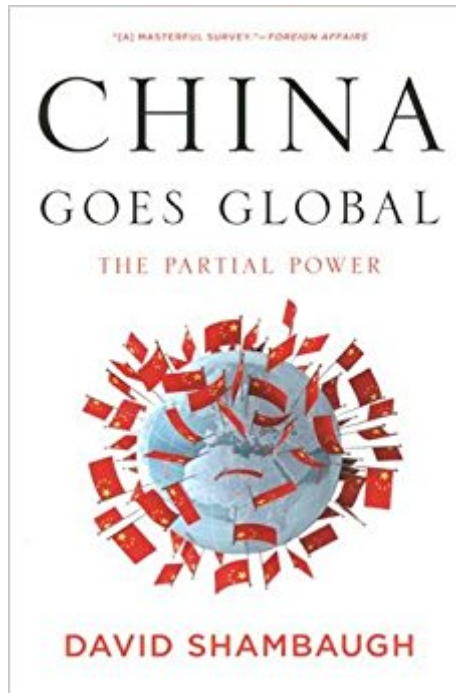




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# **China Goes Global: The Partial Power**



## Synopsis

Most global citizens are well aware of the explosive growth of the Chinese economy. Indeed, China has famously become the "workshop of the world." Yet, while China watchers have shed much light on the country's internal dynamics--China's politics, its vast social changes, and its economic development--few have focused on how this increasingly powerful nation has become more active and assertive throughout the world. In *China Goes Global*, eminent China scholar David Shambaugh delivers the book that many have been waiting for--a sweeping account of China's growing prominence on the international stage. Thirty years ago, China's role in global affairs beyond its immediate East Asian periphery was decidedly minor and it had little geostrategic power. Today however, China's expanding economic power has allowed it to extend its reach virtually everywhere--from mineral mines in Africa, to currency markets in the West, to oilfields in the Middle East, to agribusiness in Latin America, to the factories of East Asia. Shambaugh offers an enlightening look into the manifestations of China's global presence: its extensive commercial footprint, its growing military power, its increasing cultural influence or "soft power," its diplomatic activity, and its new prominence in global governance institutions. But Shambaugh is no alarmist. In this balanced and well-researched volume, he argues that China's global presence is more broad than deep and that China still lacks the influence befitting a major world power--what he terms a "partial power." He draws on his decades of China-watching and his deep knowledge of the subject, and exploits a wide variety of previously untapped sources, to shed valuable light on China's current and future roles in world affairs.

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## Customer Reviews

"David Shambaugh provides a thoughtful look at the nature and consequences of China's rise in this carefully researched and well-written volume."--Henry A. Kissinger "This is a must read for those interested in China's foreign affairs particularly and international relations generally." --Library Journal "[A] lucid, highly readable overview of China's government policy-making apparatus, media, military ambitions and capabilities, trade and investment patterns, and strained relations with almost every region of the world . . . Drawing on interviews with Chinese policymakers and his own perceptive observations of their conflicting impulses, Shambaugh pointedly corrects the usual hysterical exaggerations of Chinese power. His is an illuminating profile of a colossus that does not-yet-beside the world." --Publishers Weekly "Here's a book that has its title right -- a statement worth making because so many stretch or bend them for marketing purposes. And that's only the beginning of the elegant distillation George Washington University political scientist David Shambaugh provides in this useful volume, which offers a detailed yet concise portrait of a nation widely perceived as on the cusp of what the Chinese government often ascribes to its American rival: hegemony." --History News Network "[A] masterful survey." --Foreign Affairs "[T]imely and highly readable . . . With copious data and not a few anecdotes of his own experience, Shambaugh lays out systematically the case that China's reach, while undeniably global, is almost universally shallow." --Global Policy Journal "China Goes Global is a fascinating and scholarly challenge to the received wisdom about China's rise, and an important critique of the accepted narrative of Chinese expansionism." --The Economist "The argument of China Goes Global is made forcefully, systematically and with plenty of evidence. It marshals information and research in a way that is valuable - and often fascinating." --Financial Times

David Shambaugh is Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Director of the China Policy Program at George Washington University, as well as a nonresident Senior Fellow in the Foreign Policy Studies Program at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. His most recent books include *Tangled Titans: The United States and China*; *Charting China's Future: Domestic & International Challenges*; and *China's Communist Party: Atrophy & Adaptation*.

In 1990 I moved to Pudong, a farming area on the eastern bank of the Huangpu River, the river which divides East from West Shanghai. This was a year before Pudong was declared a Special Economic Zone and I was one of only three foreigners living there at the time. 23 years later Pudong is China's financial capital, boasts several of the world's tallest buildings and it is home to

many global companies. According to a 2011 China census there are now about 50,000 foreign residents in Pudong. So nowadays when people talk up China I am inclined to agree because I have seen the change first hand. In his book *China Goes Global, the Partial Power*, David Shambaugh, a China expert at George Washington University, acknowledges China's epochal metamorphosis from one of the poorest and, some would argue, insignificant countries in the world to one of the wealthiest. He calls this transformation, as many have before him, the "big story of our time." Yet Shambaugh does not subscribe to the hype about China's global dominance, either present or forthcoming. He writes: "Some observers have already proclaimed that China will rule the world, This prospective is profoundly overstated and incorrect in my view. ....China has a long way to go before it becomes, if it ever becomes a true Global power. And it will never rule the world." Shambaugh argues convincingly that China's global presence nowadays is in his words "shallow." Not only does China not have strong international alliances, say the way US and other western Countries do ( Chinese strongest alliances are often with closed failed states like North Korea, and Russia), but China ranks very low on many surveys which measure a country's global standing and effectiveness. Where other nations are committed to international humanitarian causes, the sole purpose of China's global undertakings Shambaugh argues is to bolster its own economy and it seldom if ever takes initiative in solving global problems e.g. environmental problems. And the Chinese economy is not what it seems according to Shambaugh. China's global dominance in exports is largely owing to Chinese Government policies which have artificially given Chinese makers an advantage over manufacturers in other countries e.g. currency manipulation that keeps the RMB undervalued and subsidies of SOE ( state owned enterprises). Shambaugh also argues that China's main exports are low-value consumer goods and that China lags far behind real global powers like the US and Japan in terms of exporting financial services and high value products. All of these are valid criticisms. One reason that China has failed to export its financial services sector to other countries is that management in Chinese companies is often mired in inefficiency and lacks a true global mindset. And this explains why so many of China's international Mergers and Acquisitions - a lot in recent years - are failing. I would have to say that I think Shambaugh is onto something here. Although I have seen China vendor performance improve over the last 20 years e.g. vendors are more upfront about their capabilities than they used to be, working with China vendors is half of the time an exercise in frustration. Vendors still refuse to take responsibility for a mistake, think nothing about misleading customers and if they do not like the project you are offering them they will simply not reply. In my own dealings with vendors in China I often feel that I am dealing with the same people I was dealing with 20 years ago. Progress can be

very slow. As I near the end of *China Goes Global* I find myself thinking back to a visit to Guangzhou a couple of years ago. I was standing at my hotel window one morning admiring the Guangzhou cityscape which seems to grow taller with each visit of mine to that city. On the expressway below me I spotted a car backing up on the shoulder of the road, an inherently dangerous maneuver. Obviously the driver had gotten off at the wrong exit and rather than get off at the next exit and go back, they had decided it was easier to back up on the expressway. I saw this vignette as being very emblematic of modern China: Progress all around but prevailing attitudes and customs which belie that progress. And this is Shambaugh's point. China changes but it remains the same. Still, in the end I am not sure that Shambaugh is not being a little reckless with his claim that China will never 'rule the world.' When he writes this I cannot help but think back that day in 1990 when I stood on the main road in Pudong and waited for over an hour for a bus that was not dangerously overcrowded (seven busses in all). If someone had told me as I waited on the dusty road where bicycles outnumbered cars 500-1 that in a space of 20 years Pudong would be one of the financial capitals of Asia (where cars probably now outnumber bicycles 500-1) I would not have believed them. But it happened. So if China one day "rules the world" or does not, only time will tell.

For anyone wanting to understand China - this book is IT. David Shambaugh has lived there; he speaks Mandarin and, most importantly, he understands the Chinese mind and soul. Many writers in the West, especially journalists, uncritically buy and reproduce propaganda about the "Great Superpower China" - the country that will leave the US and Europe in the dust. Most of these articles and pronouncements on China reflect a no more than a very superficial knowledge of China based on hearsay and propaganda. This book digs deep beneath the surface and it strips facades carefully erected by years of relentless Chinese propaganda. What he explains is that China has made astonishing strides, but it's not there yet - or will never be unless its people are set free. This is a rigorous book by an academic, footnotes, sources, and all that. But it reads as easy as a travel guide....

*China Goes Global* attempts to put into context China's influence in the world today. There is no doubt that China's economic rise has created immense interest in understanding the motives and goals of China in both the local and global context and this book adds to the literature on the subject. It is different from many of the other books on the rise of China and what that means by being very specific in its analysis of current institutions and sentiments of policy makers rather than long term hypothesizing about where the current growth trajectory of China will take it. The book is

split into 8 chapters the first and last of which set the stage with 6 middle chapters analyzing the various dimensions in which China's influence permeates. The first chapter focuses on China's global identity. It discusses how China does not have a global identity per se and has various perspectives within the country that drive the rhetoric that we often hear. The strength of the party is considered to be a function of focusing the nationalistic pride of the population against the century of humiliation that was endured and so one often hears conflicting messages from China, some catering to domestic nationalism while others to the international audience. The book then goes on to discuss the diplomatic presence and global presence. The author gives the history of the opening of China from Mao to Deng. The history with Russia and then the US is discussed. The author discusses how China is a part of the multinational world but acts in a very bilateral sense. Its voting patterns in the UN general assembly are extremely low overlap with countries like the US vs Russia for example whereas in the security council it has higher overlap. The author sees China acting on its narrow self interest and preferring abstention over action. The view that China has no interest in interfering with other sovereign states is argued quite persuasively. The next big topic tackled is China's economic presence. China is now the world's second largest economy and the growth of its economy has motivated both fear and wonder. Its impact on resources is detailed as are the elements of its business and the organization of the economy. It discusses the breadth of China's multinational corporations or lack thereof in many cases including the SOE sector. The author then discusses culture and soft power. China wants to be better understood culturally and would like to deploy more "soft power" as a function of being better understood. The author gives a detailed analysis of the various policy bodies and institutes that exist for these goals. The author also notes that they have largely been ineffective. Finally the author discusses China's growing military capabilities. China currently has the 2nd largest military budget in the world at over 100 billion USD and its technology is rapidly moving up the information frontier. The army, navy and airforce are all discussed. The author also discusses cyberwarfare and China's prominence in that field currently. The author concludes that China is a growing power but it is a partial power. He sees China as having little global influence and being risk averse and narrowly self interested in its diplomacy. The economic weight of China and its influence on the global economy is far in excess of its political influence. The author argues that China has little to no soft power as few want to emulate China despite its success and its military evolution though impressive has little to no international reach. The author argues China will continue to be a world player but it is far from a world leader. China goes Global is a welcome addition to the literature on China, it is detailed and well argued and the authors examples are very convincing. One learns a lot about the internal

conflicts and inconsistencies in policy and politics but also gets a sense of how these have come to exist. In terms of China as a model for others, it is hard to argue with the author that China has no soft power in the west as its economic engine though enviable is not interesting while embedded in its overall institutional arrangement. I do think much of the developing world though does look to China as an example of a successful way to grow out of poverty so its a bit overly critical and contextual from a western perspective. All in all this was a good addition to the literature which brings the euphoria of China's rise back down and closer to reality.

This well researched book covers all aspects of Chinese approaches to and ventures into the world beyond the Wall. It reveals how extremely complex this is and how the Chinese debate the issues of foreign relations on a very broad base of opinion before decisions, policies, investments etc. are made. Even though the Chinese reach is global, the conclusion in every field is, that so far, it is only partial and very clearly based on a traditional Chinese approach to their relations with non-Han peoples within China as well as to the surrounding countries and the greater world. For every one trying to understand what is going on, and what China's contribution to the world and role in it very well may turn out to be

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